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Ballads
of
Childhood

Michael Earls

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MORRIS GRAY

CLASS OF 1877

BALLADS OF CHILDHOOD

By the Same Author :

(Verse)

THE ROAD BEYOND THE TOWN
AND OTHER LITTLE VERSES

(Prose)

MELCHIOR OF BOSTON
STUORE

THE WEDDING BELLS OF
GLENDALOUGH

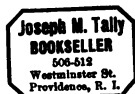
Ballads of Childhood

BY

MICHAEL EARLS, S.J.

NEW YORK CINCINNATI CHICAGO:
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1914



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MORRIS GRAY FUND

Jan 29, 1934

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W

To
Jack
AND
Your Other Friends
HE KNOWS

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TO BAYARD

THOUGH I have read of goodly men
And deeds that claim renown,
Though I shall read good deeds again
Of future field and town,—
Come all the men of gallant days,
From past or times to be,
I would not equal them with praise
My Bayard has of me.

O, well I know of Arthur's clan
And hosts of Cid and Finn,
And worthy knights where ramparts ran
To let brave honor in:
Yet far-off legend and its song
In robes of courtly art,—
I read them best where honors throng
In Bayard's loyal heart.

Not only by achievements done
On fields of bright applause
The forts of loving hearts are won
That serve good honor's laws:
But little words and little deeds,
With loyalty for king,
Go flowering up from little seeds,
And keep all years in spring.

I love the deeds of goodly men
With Arthur, Cid, and Finn,
Who drove off harm from fort or fen
To let brave honor in:
Yet all the knights of gallant ways
Of past or times to be,
I would not equal with the praise
My Bayard has of me.

A GARDEN OF WHEAT AND VINE

WHEN I came back to Boston Town by
good roads and by tumbledown,
(From ten long years of travel and the wonderlands I know),
I glanced across the olden scenes, the market
crowds and public greens,
And thought to find two children and our
love of long ago.

O, I could know them far or near, their
voices out of thousands hear,
The two that said, "We wait for you whatever year you come."
Yea, if a pageant passed my way whenever
kings made holiday,
My heart would listen elsewhere, and their
merriment was dumb.

12 *A Garden of Wheat and Vine*

So on through Boston Town I went, from
Ponkapog to Paddockbent,
I asked a hundred folk or more who smiled
and sped along:
What wonder if they did not care, whose
quest was money everywhere,
And mine two little children and a friend-
ship meet for song.

The afternoon came on apace, I met the
Mayor in his place,
With Sheriff Sirs and Counsellors that by
him sat in state;
His honor stood and greeted me and all gave
welcome courteously,
Said, "Found you Boston looking fair across
from gate to gate?"

"From Blue Hill Road to Winthrop Ware,
the Town is—well—is debonair,"
I answered with what heart I could and
slowly turned to go:

"Yet fairer would it seem to me, if now two
children I could see—"

"Two children?" quickly cried surprise:
alas! they did not know.

Away I went before the night: I saw the
priest's house and a light,
I told him why I rang the bell and got his
answer kind:

"They live—the two of whom you say, just
westward—there, a sunlit way,
A wheatfield and a vineyard by the cottage
will you find."

Indeed it was a pleasant mile, I stayed a
moment by a stile,
A wheatfield called me, "Here's the house;"
a vineyard spoke the same.

I hardly sang a line or two,—old playful
songs the children knew,
When wide the door flew open and two
voices called my name.

14 *A Garden of Wheat and Vine*

The hedgeblooms and the stars were bright
 for token of a great delight,
As "Welcome home and welcome home,"
 came ringing down the lane;
It sounded like a yesterday, ten years for-
 gotten dropped away,
To find two little hearts unchanged, the past
 all young again.

With legends out of every clime and tales
 of Once-upon-a-time,
We wove the sixty-threaded hour, till I stood
 up and said:
"I saw a field of wheat without, and good
 grapevines for hedge about;
Who tends that quarter acre, and for whom
 the wine and bread?"

"The vines I planted," answered she; "And
 I attend the wheat," quoth he;
"And ready for your Holy Mass have we
 the bread and wine."

Then graciously they drew a door, and showed
with love the little store,
And whispered, "In to-morrow's Mass to be
the Bread Divine."

And at the early morning Mass (God bless
the word) did come to pass
The Miracle! the Miracle upon the altar
stone:
The goodly village folk were there with hearts
of faith and love aware
Of Christ in forms of bread and wine, the
Bread of Life alone.

And took they Blessed Food that day and
joyous walked their homeward way,
And three the last that happy went, two
children were and I,—
Two children from the wheat and vine whose
hands prepared the bread and wine,
And I, who may the words proclaim that is
a rite divine.

16 *A Garden of Wheat and Vine*

When out of Boston Town I went, past Chelsea Gate and Tappan Tent,
My heart would keep a-whispering along
the happy air:

“Whatever years await ye two, and all your
deeds a long life through,
In gardens full of God’s good love, be miracles of prayer.”

SAINT HOLLY

(Not yet canonized)

"**I**S a saint that has my name?"
Asked a child of me:

"Any one that I may claim
For my Saint to be?"

"And the name, what is it, dear?"
Then I questioned her:

"Hildegarde or Guinevere,
Maybe Edelburh?"

"None of these, O, none of these,"
Came the quick reply:

"Holly is it, if you please
That they call me by."

"Holly? holly is a tree,"
Grave I spoke and slow:

"Yet a saint's name may it be,
If you wish to know."

“Who the Saint and lived she where?”

Sought the glancing eyes:

“Tell me how to call her care
From the far-off skies.”

“Holly,” said I, “listen, dear,

Is a tree keeps green,

Bright with beauty all the year,
Storm and calm between.

“Bright with beauty may a child,

Grace of God within,

Keep its heart, however wild
Rage the storms of sin.

“Keep forever heart and mind

Strong in heavenly grace,

And shall one named Holly find
“With the Saints a place.”

SAILOR LAD

SAILORS go from Gloucester town
Off across the briny deep;
I sail out from Pillow-down
On the gentle Sea of Sleep.

Gloucester sailors seek the cod
In the faroff northern seas;
I can catch with my dream-rod
Any kind of fish I please.

Storm or calm is all the same,
On the ocean, in the bay;
Every harbor knows my name,
I know every fish's way.

Once I struck an awful gale
Off the Banks of Midnight Dune,
And I saw a monster whale
Waiting for my long harpoon.

How he piled the sea with spray,
As I shot him through the back;
Then he turned and sped away,—
Close was I upon his track.

Off we went to Behring Sea,
Back again to Singapore,
And I slipped and cut my knee
On an Indian coral shore.

When we came to Cripple Crow,
I was tired and hungry, too;
And the whale,—I heard him blow,
“ I will breakfast now on you.”

So one final dash I tried
For the shores of Rocky Rhyme:
Dad stood calling at my side,
“Sailor, wake, it’s breakfast time.”

Sailors go from Gloucester town
Off in danger o’er the deep;
I sail out from Pillow-down
On the wondrous Sea of Sleep.

BOBBY BRIM

LITTLE Bobby Brim,
 (Now don't you bother him)
Is busy, just as busy as can be,
 A frock he has to don,
 And with his jumpers on,
He goes to urgent labors, don't you see.

 It's not to build a shed,
 Or paint the new fence red,
It's not to mow the lawn or stack the hay;
 Nor wildest things to shoot,
 Nor pick the orchard fruit,
That Bobby wears his working-clothes to-day.

 But if you'd like to view
 What little hands will do,
Just peep a moment through the cellar door;

You see a row of pans,
Of glasses, jars, and cans,—
Bob's ma is setting by the winter store.

And Bob is there to see
Just where the things will be,
The hidden things of every shelf and tray:
To know just where he'll find
The jars and cans (you mind?)
When mother wants them on some cooking-
day.

Of course, now, Bobby Brim,
(You don't think wrong of him)
Will often by the cellar shelves be found:
He must taste each jar of jell,
And the twenty jams to tell
If Johnny Frost, the thief, has been around.

GREAT TRAVELLERS

WHEN teacher tells us stories
Of lands this way and that,
And all the wonders in between
From here to Ararat;
Two little lads beside me,
At first seem very slow,
And will not marvel at the tales,
For better things they know.

“Huh! talk about that Naples,”
Then one of them will say,
“But I see wonderfuller sights
In clouds of Evening Bay;
Along by seas of purple,
Where hills and islands stand,
The galleon ships go sailing on
To Make-Believe-a-Land.”

“ And talk of plains of battle,”
The other one replies,
“ Why, bigger wars I know about,
And no one ever dies;
For in our fortress-orchard
I start a mutiny,
And two or four great pirates fall,
Just apples from a tree.”

So half a hundred stories
They tell that come to pass,
When they like knights and musketeers
Win kingdoms in the grass ;
Or sail by wondrous islands
That come and go like dreams,
Where everything is safe and big
And nothing is that seems.

TO JAMES

I CANNOT find in all the names
One I would like to use for James;
I can't say Jimmy, no, nor Jim,
For they don't look a bit like him.

If he were Scotch (how strange it seems)
I then could call him *cannie Jeems* ;
Mon petit Jacques is what he'd be,
If he were French, and said, *Oui, Oui*.

If he were but some Irish lad,
Shemus aroon would make him glad;
Or were his home in Germany
Mein kleiner Jacob would he be.

Were he some Spanish mother's dear,
Santiagito would he hear;
And if from Italy he came,
Then *Jacobino* were his name.

But I can't find in all these names
One that I'd like to use for James;
Because—because, dear James, you see,
Dear James is good enough for me.

THE CHILD'S PLAY OF MEN

IT must be fun like dad to play
In his big store down town,
To have a lot of games all day,
And never stop to frown:
To measure yards of everything,
And weigh big things and small,
To hear the voice of traffic sing,
And prices rise and fall.

For that is all dad has to do,
As far as I can see,
If St. Augustine's word is true
That mother told to me.
"For children's play," Augustine said,
"When they are grown to men,
Is children's play, though earning bread,
They call it business then."

A FELLOW I KNOW

I KNOW a fellow at our school
And all he's good for is to fool;
He cares no more for class and books
Than fishes do for empty hooks;
His only business is to play
And kill the time in any way.

I know a man lives on our street,
The saddest man of all I meet;
He goes his lonely-looking way,
And has no heart for work or play;
For when he was a boy at school,
His only business was to fool

THE AUTUMN PAINTER

I HAVE seen the country painter
At the corner of the lane,
And his name in great red letters
Printed on the window-pane.
I have watched him mixing colors,
Bending over with a stick,
Turning, lifting, till he finished,
And I'm sure I know the trick.

So I'm going to do some painting,
And no little job have I;
It's no fence along the roadside,
Nor a chimney near the sky;
But I'm going to paint the orchard,
And the trees upon the hill,
All the hedges by the garden,
And the willow near the mill.

For the summer now is over,
And the leaves must change the green
To a thousand tints and colors,
When October takes the scene;
Brown must be the oaks and beeches,
Crimson must the hedges be,
Twenty shades upon the maples,
For my Autumn Queen to see.

So I'll gather up my colors,—
Sunset gold and red of dawn,
And the mountain mists of purple,
And the white fog on the lawn;
Then the winds will do the mixing,
And my brush will be the breeze;
Cold and clear will be the canvas,
When the rains have washed the trees.

Look, while still the lawn and woodland
Hold the green of summer days!
Look, and fill your eyes with wonder
When you see October's ways.

Soon my canvas will be ready,
 Soon my brush will ply its trade;
Then you'll see my gold and purple
 Over all the forests laid.

AT LONDON BRIDGE

O, HERE is London City
And this is London Town,
And here do I stand asking,
“Where is the Bridge is falling down?”

But no good man will answer
But laugh and pass by me,
For not a bridge is falling,
As far and far as I can see.

O, not a bridge is falling,
And yet I thought it so;
I heard it said in London
A bridge was falling long ago.

I heard my mother sing it,
Her mother sang it, too;
And here I've crossed the ocean,
And find, alas! it is not true.

Then must I wait a twelvemonth,
A twelvemonth and a day,
To prove the song will happen
And London Bridge will fall away?

O, I will wait no twelvemonth,
But I will wait a day,
And all good men that pass me
Will look and wonder why I stay.

And surely when I'm sleeping
To-night in London Town,
I'll hear far voices singing,
"See, London Bridge is falling down."

A LITTLE FARMER

SOME folks like to be a soldier,
Others like the trackless sea,
But a good and healthy farmer
Is the only thing for me.

I will tell you where my farm is
If you come with me awhile.
Close your eyes and listen closely,—
Will you promise not to smile?

It is in a pleasant valley
Where a river gently flows,
And the hills that rise beside it
Stop the north wind when it blows.

Forests like some marching army
Up and down the valley go,
Guarding with their arms so sturdy,
Verdant fields for things to grow.

Berry vines and grapes in clusters,
Cover all the fences round;
Pumpkins fit for Jack-o'-Lanterns
Lie like gold upon the ground.

Up the hills are prancing ponies,
In the groves you'll see a deer;
Look! like clouds out on the pasture,
All the sheep that I have here.

Just like clouds, when night is falling.
Look now, open wide your eyes:
See them! See them! Clouds like sheep there,
Going home across the skies.

TO DOROTHY

WHAT is in a name? you ask,
This I know is true,—
Doron, gift, and *Theos*, God,
Spell the name of you.

Gift-of-God, O may the name
Bless a long life through;
And may heaven welcome then
Gift-to-God of you.

BARON VON DOUGALL

OLD Baron von Dougall who lived in a
glen,

O laugh ye or cry, is the pity of men:

In folly one day,

His heart went astray

And so lost its way,

Above on a mountain or down in a fen.

The Baron was proud and he thought himself
wise,

He learned bits of everything under the
skies:

He wrote a big book,

And wore a deep look,

His back had a crook

That helped him to carry his learned dis-
guise.

But wisdom is humble and wisdom is kind,
And dwells like a child in the halls of the
mind;

But never with pride,
When scoffers deride
Will wisdom abide,
Or light up the roadways if learning is
blind.

And Baron von Dougall, alas! would not
see

That life is no riddle but plain as can be;—
Life's pathways are clear,
To eye and to ear,
All times of the year,
If humbly with God you walk mountain or
lea.

But on and still onward von Dougall would
go,

Alone without God and alone to his woe;
 With pride for his light,
 And thoughts that affright,
 The day turned to night,
And lost went the Baron, let everyone know.

MY HUNTING GROUNDS

THOUGH I always stay at home
I can hunt like any man
And my jungles I can roam,
Like a very African.

Africa is black, they say,
But I know a blacker land,
Where there is no sun or day,
Only stars like grains of sand.

When the nighttime comes around,
I jump in my jungle bed,
And I see the forest ground
In the dark above my head.

Soon the things begin to come,
Some can crawl and some can fly,
Some you know the way they hum,
Others scare you when they cry.

Lions come with open jaws,
Big as caves beside the sea;
And the tigers show their claws,
Pointing them right straight at me.

When they all get very near,
I jump up in awful fright,
But they quickly disappear
In the dreamlands of the night.

Africa is black, they say,
But I know a blacker land,
Where there is no sun or day,
Only stars like silver sand.

IN THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S STUDIO

HERE is a funny kind of sea,
The waters do not flow,
And never is a noise of waves,
And ships stay always so.
For here are only painted things,
Like clouds that cannot fall,
Or wrinkled canvas just for rocks,
And no soft sand at all.

It's very easy you can tell
The place is Make-believe,
That it is just a picture-sea
All made up to deceive:
For if the ocean really was
So near us where I stand
My clothes would look quite otherwise
From playing in the sand.

MAY-DAY

WHAT rapture thrills along the hills
In welcome of the Spring!

In bright array they greet his way
With flowery offering:

Abloom are trees with melodies
Where birds all joyous sing.

Yet fairer far the lovelands are
Within our souls to-day!
Like wondrous flowers in springtime hours,
Our hearts in fragrance sway,
And bloom all sweet before the feet
Of Mary, Queen of May.

O here we bring for offering
The lily's heart of white,
The love that blows from lilac rows
In purple splendor bright;

And every hue that blossoms drew
From mines of golden light.

Dear Mother, take the gifts we make
From springtime's flowering;
And take, above the May-time, love,
Our hearts all gladly bring,
Eternal be our praise of thee,
Mother of Christ, the King!

THE BONNIE PRINCE O' SPRING

THE little green soldiers are here at last,
With their waving blades and spears;
And across the hills they are marching
fast

With the drill of a thousand years:
And I wave afar, and I shout, Hurrah!
Till I hear their echoing cheers.

A bonnie prince is at their head,
And his love all the legions know:
For he gives them rest where the twigs
are red
At the hedges cool in a row:
And afoot are they soon to a birdlike tune
On the northward march to go.

Oh, I am leal to the marching men,
To my bonnie Prince I am true;
For he tells me the way to his tented glen,
And the secret password too:
And he sets in my hair a blossom to wear,
Like his own good horsemen do.

Then I will follow on all the day
Where the bonnie Prince has led,
Till we drive the Winter foemen away
And throne my Prince instead:
And sing willaloo! with the birds, willaloo!
For the Winter King is dead.

FRIENDS AGAIN

FOR some rebuke, poor, little lad,
His heart waged war on me;
The friendliness that once he had
Now fed on enmity.

He came across my wonted path
With dark, averted face;
Upon his brow hung puny wrath,
Where once was merry grace.

And should I leave him to his pride
And petty childishness:
Or cast all harsher thoughts aside
And do sweet deeds that bless?

The morrow came; we two were near;
I greeted him "Good-day"—
His voice came back all sweet and clear,
His heart again was gay.

And so, good Lord, I pray to Thee,
If e'er I give Thee pain,
O, let Thy Heart's humility
Come bring me back again.

MY GALLERY

A MAN from Paris told us,
 (And pictures did he show)
Of artist works of wonder
 In galleries in a row,
 Where travellers may go.

He showed us scenes of England,
 And paintings out of Spain,
And countless other marvels,
 Like lands that needed rain,
 And kings that stood in pain.

But never were his pictures
 So wonderful to me,
For in my little attic
 Are greater things to see,—
 To look at them is free.

They lie upon the ceiling,
And cover up the wall,
And if you come I'll show you
The big ones and the small,
When evening shadows fall.

There! see the fearful tigers,
(You think a smoky stain)
I make them turn to anything,
A mountain or a plain,
Or tigers back again.

Now watch that dusty ceiling
And faces will look out,
As plain as some big army:
And listen, "Rightabout!"—
I think I heard a shout.

There's Africa and Iceland,
And here is Baffin Bay,
And up there in the corner,
(Where rain fell in one day),
Why, that's a load of hay.

Now look again! it's China,
And fairies on a hill,
And tigers run from kittens,
Out by the window sill,
Where night is very still.

The travelling man had pictures,
But pictures, that was all;
But mine can change to anything
On ceiling and on wall,
When evening shadows fall.

AN AUTUMN ROSE-TREE

IT seemed too late for roses
When I walked abroad to-day,
October stood in silence,
By the hedges all the way:
Yet did I hear a singing,
And I saw a red rose-tree:—
In fields so gray with autumn
How could song or roses be!

Oh, it was never maple
Nor the dogwood's coat afire,
No sage with scarlet banners,
Nor the poppy's vested choir:
The breeze that may be music
When the summer lawns are fair
Will have no heart for singing
In the autumn's mournful air.

As I went up the roadway,
Under cold and lonely skies,
A song I heard, a rose-tree
Waved to me in glad surprise:—
A red cloak and a ribbon,
(Round the braided hair of jet)
And redder cheeks than roses
Of a little Margaret.

Now God is good in autumn,
He can name the birds that sing,
He loves the hearts of children
More than flowery fields of spring:
And when the years of winter
Gray with Margaret will be,
God will find her love still blossom
Like a red rose-tree.

BATCHEE LE BLANC

OLD Batchee le Blanc is a queer French
man,

The queerest I ever did see,
He talks French easy and fast as he can,
As he shakes his head,

“Ba oui!”

And his horse and dog know French, of
course,

“Ba oui, mon cher, ba oui!”

His dog knows nothing of English at all,
Or the threats of Yankee law,
And never stops barking till Batchee call
With a big French stick,

“Tais toi!”

And the dog will hide as still as a mouse,

“Tais _toi, gros chien, tais toi.”

But his horse goes faster when told to,
 "Whoa!"

Away with the two-wheeled trap,
And when he wants him to canter slow
He laughs and says

 "Git-ap!"

With a light French laugh, he stops the horse
 "Git-ap, cheval, git-ap!"

I asked old Batchee le Blanc to-day,
 Could he teach his French to me,
And then will the horse and the dog obey,
 If I speak to them,
 "Ba oui!"

If I use a word or a stick in French,
 "Ba oui, Batchee, ba oui!"

AFTER VACATION

BY hill and vale September rules,
The summer suns no longer burn;
And in the woods and in the schools,
The leaves, alas! begin to turn.

A LITTLE RAILROAD MAN

I. Now

FROM Boston Town to Frisco Bay
The crossing railroads go,
And some run down a southern way,
And some where north winds blow:
From east and west by night and day
Are countless roads, I know.

See, like a spider's web they stand
Across the colored chart,
They track the level prairie land
And crowd the busy mart:
And reach round like a mighty hand
That holds a countr 's heart.

Oh, there is Good Hope by a sea,
And here is Santa Fe,
And over there is Merrilee,
And this is Spendaday:
And now we take a homeward way,
The best way that can be.

So if you want a day of fun,
I'll be the guide for you,
Across the map our course will run
As quick as lightnings do:
And we'll come home before the sun
Waves us a glad adieu.

II. Later

Like crossing lines in queer designs
Are other roads to know:
The ways of life through peace or strife,
Each human heart must go:
Now on it speeds by merry meads,
Now summits that are slow.

We ride away and gladly pay
With work and prayer the toll:
O'er hill and dale God marks a trail
For journey of the soul,
And lights the skies for earnest eyes
That seek the one great Goal.

By mount or moor the way is sure,
And signal lights are clear,
Where faith and hope round every slope
Await the engineer:
And he is blest within whose breast
Is God who knows not fear.

Deep in your heart by mead or mart
God's graces go with you,
Through joy and pain, like hill and plain,
To keep your journey true,
'Till with His light you pass the Night
And wave the world adieu.

IN A SEA-SHELL

ONCE a child beside her mother
Held a sea-shell to her ear,
Fancying the distant ocean
Far to windward she could hear.

“O, my mother, why the moaning,
Sad and low it seems to be?”

*'Tis the water's Miserere
For the dead beneath the sea.*

“Now the sounds are sweet and hopeful,
Crooning low, but calling far:”

*Some lone mother of a sailor
Calls the care of Ocean's Star.*

“O, then tell me why the shrieking,
And a wild and lonely cry:”

*For the sailor rides the rigging
And the wild winds whistle by.*

“ Strong with joy is now the music,
Drawing near it seems to be: ”
Near the harbor sings the sailor
Hymns of Mary, Star of Sea.

“ Songs I hear all full of gladness,
Close beside a sunny shore: ”
When the sailor greets his mother
Safe beside the cottage door.

A MOTHER'S CARE

HE was a wholesome-hearted boy,
With youthful freedom was he free,
And all his world was sunny joy
For all his heart's integrity.

Along the ways of life one day
We met by chance's happy art;
So likely seemed he every way,
I made of him a brother heart.

But even brothers may forget;
His glee one day, not understood,
I chided hard; his eyes were wet
From what I said in heartless mood.

I left him so; his youth was weak
To answer back my heartlessness;
But, lo! there was a voice to speak
And champion his sad distress.

For all that night I seemed to hear
His chiding mother—who was dead—
Speak for her boy and raise the tear
Within my eyes for all I said.

The years go on and brotherly:
No harshness e'er again is heard,
Nor ever shall, since unto me
His mother spake a mother's word.

THE EASTER OF THE FLOWERS

ORPHANS of Summer, little seeds,
Whipped by the winds of Autumn,
Fell where their mother Summer died,
Into a grave of clotted weeds;
But in their hearts a faith was strong,
Hoping a resurrection,
Voicing their faith beneath the mold,
Calmly they kept this hopeful song:
"We know our Master ever lives,
The laws He made we strongly trust,
And when His word to Spring He gives,
His law shall raise us from the dust."

Hearing the song, with wounded pride
Angrily came the Winter.
Sealing the land with barrier snows,
Madly the seed-song it decried;

Soon came a message from the Spring,
Serving the seeds' great Master,
Warm grew the winds across the earth,
Up sprang the hearts of hope to sing:
"O, we have risen as we said,
The trusted summons we have heard,
Our Master's word is never dead,
The law within us is His word."

MOTHER AND I IN THE MAY

QUEENS may ride in a gilded coach,
With guards at every door;
Kings go out with their cavalry,
Trumpeters playing before;
And the city is gay
In a royal way,
Hail to the king! says the cannon's
roar.

I am a king in my own good realm,
And I have a royal sway;
Over the land is my mother Queen,
All in a queenly way;
And a throne have we
And chivalry,
Down in our valleys of May.

Never a guardsman walks with us,
When we go through the land,
Yet may a thousand liegemen come
To take us by the hand;
And everywhere
We hear the air
Echo a singing band.

Kind are the eyes that look at us,
Brave are the words they say;
Gentle the service the flowermen give,
Uniformed in our way;
Long be our reign,
Long live the twain,
Mother and I in the May!

TO CATHERINE

(Aged Five)

DOWN the roads of June with me
Went a little song,
Running on by brook and tree,
Luring me along.

“Kataleen! O Kataleen!”
Was the song I heard.
Who was she that seemed the queen
Of a lovelorn bird?

Vainly watched I every throat
Up and down the glen;
Never thrush could sing the note,
Oriole or wren.

Home I came across the green,
By the wooded lane;
"Kataleen! O Kataleen!"
Still the sweet refrain.

Catherine was at the door,
Rose-like waved her hand,
Sweeter music than before
Ran around the land.

Now I know who is the queen,
Whose the minstrel art:
Catherine is Kataleen,
Sings a mother's heart.

THE SONG OF WORKADAY MILL

THE brook runs down by Workaday Hill,
And turns the wheel of the valley mill,—
The wheel and the brook that work all
day

With a merry song and joyful way:

“ Welapse-is-leery, welapse-is-loo!

We never get weary; O hist, do you? ”

And mother she smiled, one day as we
stayed

To hear the song the waterwheel made;

The mill is the heart of the valley, said
she,

And the good folk work to this melody:

“ Welapse-is-leery, welapse-is-loo!

We never get weary; O say, do you? ”

72 *The Song of Workaday Mill*

Full wagons come down from many a plain
And bring the harvest of golden grain;
And out to the world goes flour for bread
From the good folk's work and the song that
said:

“ Welapse-is-leery, welapse-is-loo!
We never get weary, and why should
you? ”

And mother she said, as we came away,
That song is for work, as song is for play;
And the work God gives to us all, said she,
If done in His will, is a melody:

“ Perhaps it's dreary, perhaps it's small,
But we never weary; God counts it all.”

THE LAST GIFT

OLD Santa Claus by night and day
Drove round the world his reindeer
sleigh,
By chimneyed roofs, with gifts and mirth
He sought the young ones of the earth.

And when the bells in midnight chime
Rang from the towers of Father Time,
Then Santa drove up with a cheer
And gave old Time a bright New Year.

TO HELEN AND GERARD

O, THERE was the shore like a cloth of
gold,
And blue was the sky that day,
And bright as a beam from the laughing sea
Came wonderment and they.

O, where was the shore and the cloudless sky,
And the sea so passing fair?
At a little chapel on Lady-day,
And the flower of friendship there.

When the tapers passed and the hymn was
still
And the organ's soul of praise,
To the doorway home two children came
And blessed all future days.

O, the soft spring-buds take the old oak-
tree,

And the tiny hands took mine,
In the tendril fingers my heart was fast
Like a tower within the vine.

Now that was the day of the wondrous
sky,

By the shores of youth we strayed,
For the sand was gold and the sea was song
To the hearts of the boy and maid.

O, great were the towns we built in the
sand,

And oft did we sail the sea,
And we found a lost Utopian land
Though never a league went we.

But, alas! for the tides must rise and fall,
And, alas! for the years also;
Where the tides of time go east and west
On the separate seas we go.

Yet the towns stand true by the singing shore,
All loyal in sun or rain,
And the towers we built in the Long-Ago
Look fondly over the main.

On the ship aloft where I set it safe
Is the banner of God's good will:
At rest in the bay or running a gale,
My prayer goes with it still.

A LITTLE CHRISTMAS SONG

WIDE ways speed to taverns bright,
And to halls of fame,
Those are red with sense delight,
These with honor's flame;
Soon they grow all cold and gray,
For the heart will tire;
No good man but will away
From a phantom fire.

Bleak though be a hillside lane,
Yea, and bleak the night,
Joy all surely men may gain
In the Shepherd's light;
Halls of fame may darkly frown,
Taverns close to them,
Yet they keep in field or town
Joy from Bethlehem.

THE LIGHTS OF WORCESTER TOWN

FIVE great hills with groves and towers
Stand like a wall round Worcester Town,
Fair are they all days and hours,
Most of all when the night comes down :
Camped in beauty if winter snows them,
Royal they wear rich autumn's gown,
Gleaming if dawn or noontime shows them,
Fairest of all when the night comes down.

Up the hillsides, down the lowlands,
Jewelled with lights all Worcester glows,
Magical squares like fairy showlands,
Arbors of lily, or banks of rose:
Some like ghosts with footsteps stealthy
Pale on the hills where Spencer goes,
Others in windows warm and healthy,
They of the lily, these of the rose.

Waters in Blackstone's courseway flowing
 Hold in their eyes of pond and stream
Tier on tier, the mill lamps showing
 Arches of light like a land of dream.
Motion of looms is pictured by them,
 Passing of folk in a golden gleam,
Spindle and shuttle and men that ply them,
 Weaving the tapestries fair as a dream.

Out from the deep dark hills come flashing
 Trailing lights when the trains go by,
Eastward, westward, they are dashing
 Quick as meteors cross the sky.
Beacons aloft on tower and steeple
 Signal their words to the watching eye,
Ribbons of light see town and people
 Flash like a comet across the sky.

80 *The Lights of Worcester Town*

Five great hills all marked with highways,
 Stand like a wall round Worcester Town,
Lights aglowing in halls and byways,
 Magical look when the night comes down.
Silvery stars of a city gleaming,
 Jewels bedecking its golden gown,
Lily or rose in gardens seeming
 Parts of a fairyland night brings down.

ENVOY

MY WALKS

WHEN shall my heart be wiser
And foolishness leave me,
When shall I make adviser
A many a man I see?
For they go gather money
On gloomy roads of care,
And feed on gall for honey
The golden thistles bear.

But I sing up the highways
And dream down lonely lanes,
Though never hills or byways
Give hope of golden gains;
Yet bring I home at night-time
My heart full of a joy
That makes the dark a bright time
And keeps a man a boy.

For childwise do I measure
The realms of sky and ground,
And find the hills with treasure
Of joyous thoughts abound,—
The stainless gold of graces
That gleam from cloud or sod,
Through all the pilgrim places
I walk abroad with God.

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